

REMARKS

In accordance with the foregoing, the specification has been amended to improve form and provide improved correlation with the drawings and claims. Claims 1 and 32 have been amended, claim 34 has been added, and claims 8-31 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-6, 32, and 34 are pending and under consideration. No new matter is presented in this Amendment.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 101:

The Examiner rejected claims 8-13 and 21-31 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as being directed toward non-statutory subject matter. Claims 8-13 and 21-31 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and the rejections are thus moot.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-6 and 29-32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nonomura (U.S. Publication 2003/0108338) in view of Gotoh et al. (U.S. Patent 7,236,531). Claims 29-31 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer; the rejection of these claims is thus moot. The applicants respectfully traverse the remaining rejections.

As an initial matter, Nonomura only discloses one system time clock counter, not a sub-audio system time clock counter as recited in claim 1. The STC disclosed in Nonomura decodes both the audio and video (paragraph 224). Nowhere does Nonomura disclose a sub-audio system time counter to provide a system time clock sequence which is used for decoding the sub-audio packet data by the sub-audio decoder. Nonomura discloses using the same STC counter to decode both the still images and the audio data (paragraphs 224-226). The Examiner implicitly admits this deficiency by asserting that Gotoh discloses multiple, independent system time clock counters.

Even if it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to combine the disclosures of Nonomura and Gotoh, such a combination would not have resulted in the decoding apparatus as recited in claim 1. Gotoh discloses a multi-channel display apparatus that displays data from multiple channels simultaneously. Gotoh discloses several embodiments having multiple system time clock (STC) counters (FIG. 1;

col. 18, lines 60-65). Each of the STC counters is used to decode data from one of the channels (col. 18, line 64-col. 19, line 4). For example, STC counter 13a can reproduce AV data from channel 1, STC counter 13b can reproduce AV data from channel 2, and so on. The video data decoded using the STC counters is displayed on the main screen (col. 19, lines 5-10).

Combining this disclosure of multiple STC counters to decode multiple AV streams (channels), together with Nonomura's disclosure of a single STC counter to decode audio and still picture information corresponding to a single slide show, would result in multichannel display device able to display multiple slide shows and having a plurality of STC counters, each used to decode video or still images corresponding to a different slide show. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not modify this combination to include a sub-audio system time clock counter, as both Nonomura and Gotoh disclose using a single STC to decode audio and image data for one data stream, not a mainstream STC counter to decode mainstream packet data and another STC counter to decode sub-audio packet data, as recited in claim 1. As neither Gotoh nor Nonomura suggest using a sub-audio STC counter to provide a system time clock sequence which controls the decoding time of the sub-audio packet data, and the Examiner has not provided any reason why a person of ordinary skill in the art would make such a modification, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the combination of Gotoh and Nonomura to arrive at all the limitations of claim 1, and the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-6 depend from claim 1. The rejection of claims 2-6 should be withdrawn for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 32 recites, in part, an audio decoder to decode audio data provided to the apparatus based on a second system time clock that is independent of the first system time clock. As discussed above with respect to claim 1, it would not have been obvious to modify the combination of Nonomura and Gotoh to arrive at this limitation, and the rejection of claim 32 should therefore be withdrawn.

Claims 8-13 and 21-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nonomura (U.S. Publication 2003/0108338) in view of Gotoh et al. (U.S. Patent 7,236,531) and further in view of Hamada et al. (U.S. Publication 2002/0135608). Claims 8-13 and 21-27 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer; the rejections of claims 8-13 and 21-27 are thus moot.

NEW CLAIM:

Claim 34 has been added. Claim 34 is allowable for at least the reasons given above with respect to claim 1.

CONCLUSION:

The Applicants request entry of this response under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 because the amendments should not entail any further search by the Examiner since no new features are being added and no new issues are being raised; and the amendment does not significantly alter the scope of the claims and would place the application at least into a better form for purposes of appeal by removing the § 101 rejection.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 503333.

Respectfully submitted,

STEIN, MCEWEN & BUI, LLP

Date: 3/6/08

By: G. L. Clinton
Gregory L. Clinton
Registration No. 59,134

1400 Eye St., N.W.
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 216-9505
Facsimile: (202) 216-9510